

Appl. No. 09/879,794
Amdt. dated April 27, 2004
Reply to Office Action of October 6, 2003

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 1-31 are pending.

II. The Present Amendment

No new matter has been introduced by the present amendments. The amendments (a) correct the dependency of claim 8, and (b) correct the status identifier for claim 9, which was inadvertently stated to be "original" in the amendment mailed by the Applicants on April 6, 2004. The dependency of claim 9 was in fact amended in the Applicants' Response to Restriction Requirement mailed July 7, 2003.

III. Remarks

The amendments herein assume that the amendments set forth in the Applicants' amendment dated April 6, 2004, have been entered. The amendment to claim 8 corrects an inadvertent error of dependency. The amendment to claim 9 brings the listing of the claims into compliance with the rules for status identifiers. Applicants therefore submit that entry of these supplemental amendments is proper at this time.

IV. Comment on Status of the Application

Applicants note for the record the voice mail left by the Examiner for the undersigned counsel acknowledging that the Notice of Abandonment mailed April 13, 2004, was in error and will be withdrawn in due course. Applicants note their appreciation for the Examiner's assistance in correcting the status of the application.

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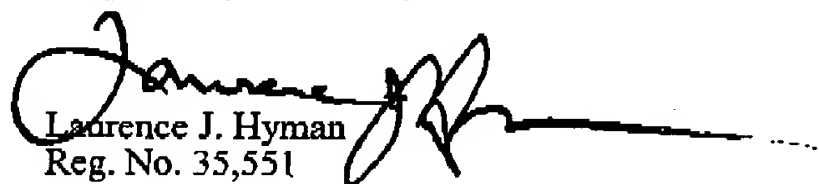
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, she is invited to telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,


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